

# Organisational Identification of Academic Staff and its Relationship to the Third Stream

*What is TS and why do academics do it?*

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# Aims

To develop a perspective of a universities third stream strategy from an Academic Identity standpoint.

Aim to establish academic staff's

- Identity factors
- Perception of how this identity is reflected by their organisation, (referred to organisational identity).

Linking this to the changing university, the growth of AE, TS and KT

- The academic staff's value and understanding of commonly utilised terms such as Academic Enterprise and Third Stream

*The study is undertaken within one faculty of Manchester Metropolitan University. The research consisted of a small deductive research project, interviewing seven Academics,*

# Strategy and Identity

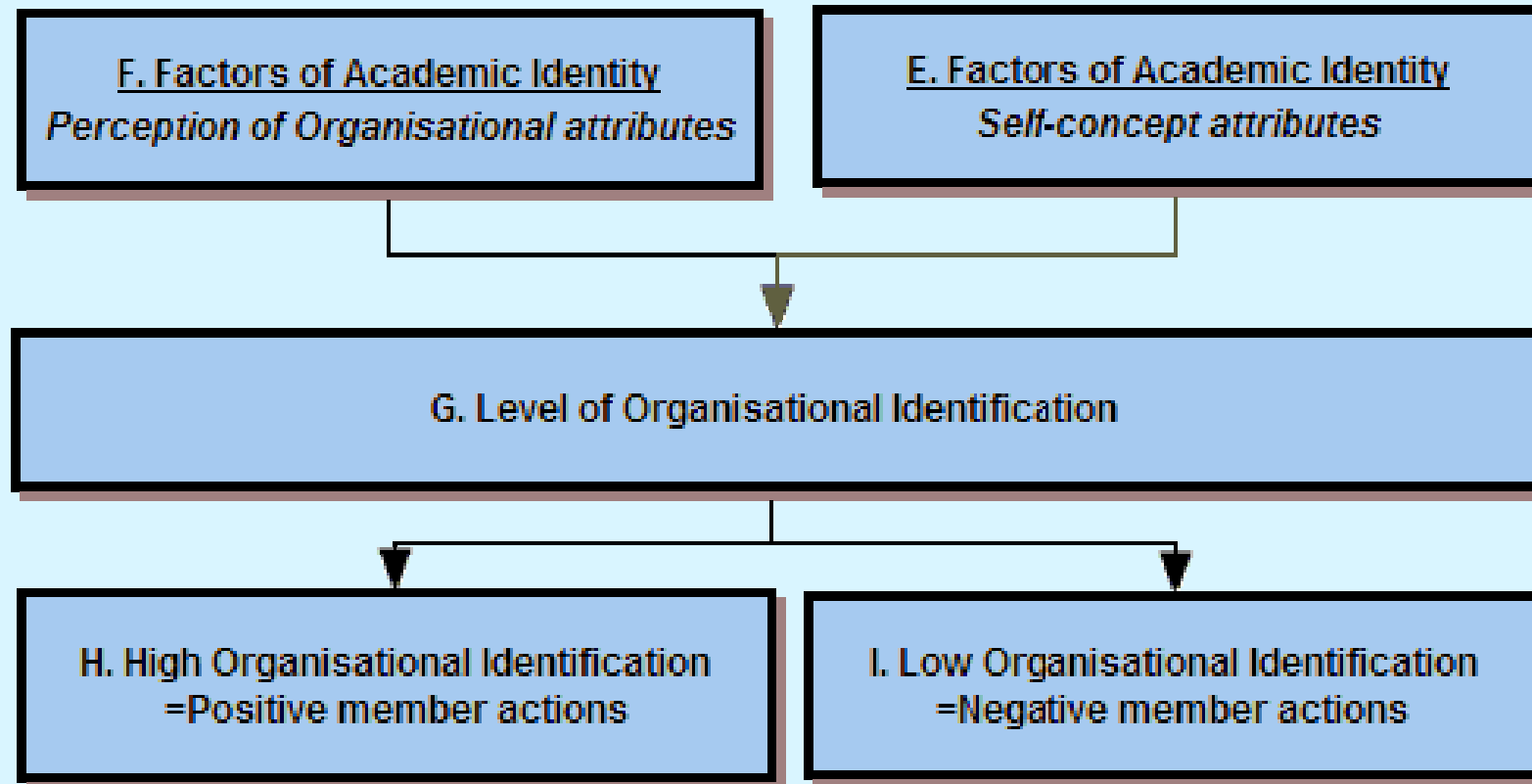
- Andrews (1987, p. 19) argues that the values, ideals and aspirations of individuals influence purpose and need to be brought into strategic decision making
  - problems within strategy implementation were because, the members past thinking, personal values, cultural loyalties, rules and restraints, where not incorporated.
- Wittington (1992) culture (in particular class, professions and the nation.) guides strategy (systemic perspective)
- “*Strategies often fail as they do not join the prevalent concepts and desires of organisational members*”. Leibl (2001) and Mezia et. al. (2001), (cited in Elsback, 1996)
- Rughase (2006), strategic management practice focuses on logical aspects and states that other aspects such as values and emotions of organisational members are dismissed.
- Dutton et. al. (1994) individual organisational member will interpret the various strategic issues, this interpretation will then influence which strategies are noticed and which are not.

# Organisational identification

- Dutton et. al. (1994) models an individual's identity and self concept as a relationship to the organisations identity "organisational identity".
- "Organisational identification"
  - The degree to which the members concept of their personal identity is perceived (by the member) as having the same attributes as the organisation
- It is argued that a positive organisational identification may convert into desired outcomes, examples include; intraorganisational cooperation or citizenship behaviours.

# Organisational Identification

(Modified with academic titles, Dutton et. al., 1994)



*If the organisational member (academic) has a positive OI, strategic initiatives (such as TS/AE/KT), if aligned with this OI, will be embraced and undertaken positively.*

# Change Affecting Identity

- Only when identity is threatened does the hidden identity of members become distinctive (Turner, et. al., (1994) (Cited in Elsbach, 1996))
- E.g. A social service agency buying expensive office furniture, prompting the question

*"What is this organization really about?"*  
(Dutton et. al., 1994)

- Elsbach (1996) "identity dissonance"

# Strategic change factor

## Third stream & the Entrepreneurial University

### Literature leans towards an entrepreneurial definition

The majority of work on TS relies on a definition of TS from an academic entrepreneur perspective.

- Rothaermel et. al. (2007) conducted a review of the TS literature (146) - reference to academics outside of technology transfer roles are distinctly absent; (i.e. academics operating in the mainstream (teaching and research)).
- Triple Helix University-Government-Industry model (Etzkowitz, 2008) develops the notion of industry, government and university interlinked for the purpose of innovation and entrepreneurship. The focus is on the entrepreneurial

*“Many academics believe that a university best fulfils its mission by limiting itself to education and research” (Etzkowitz, 2008, p. 4)*

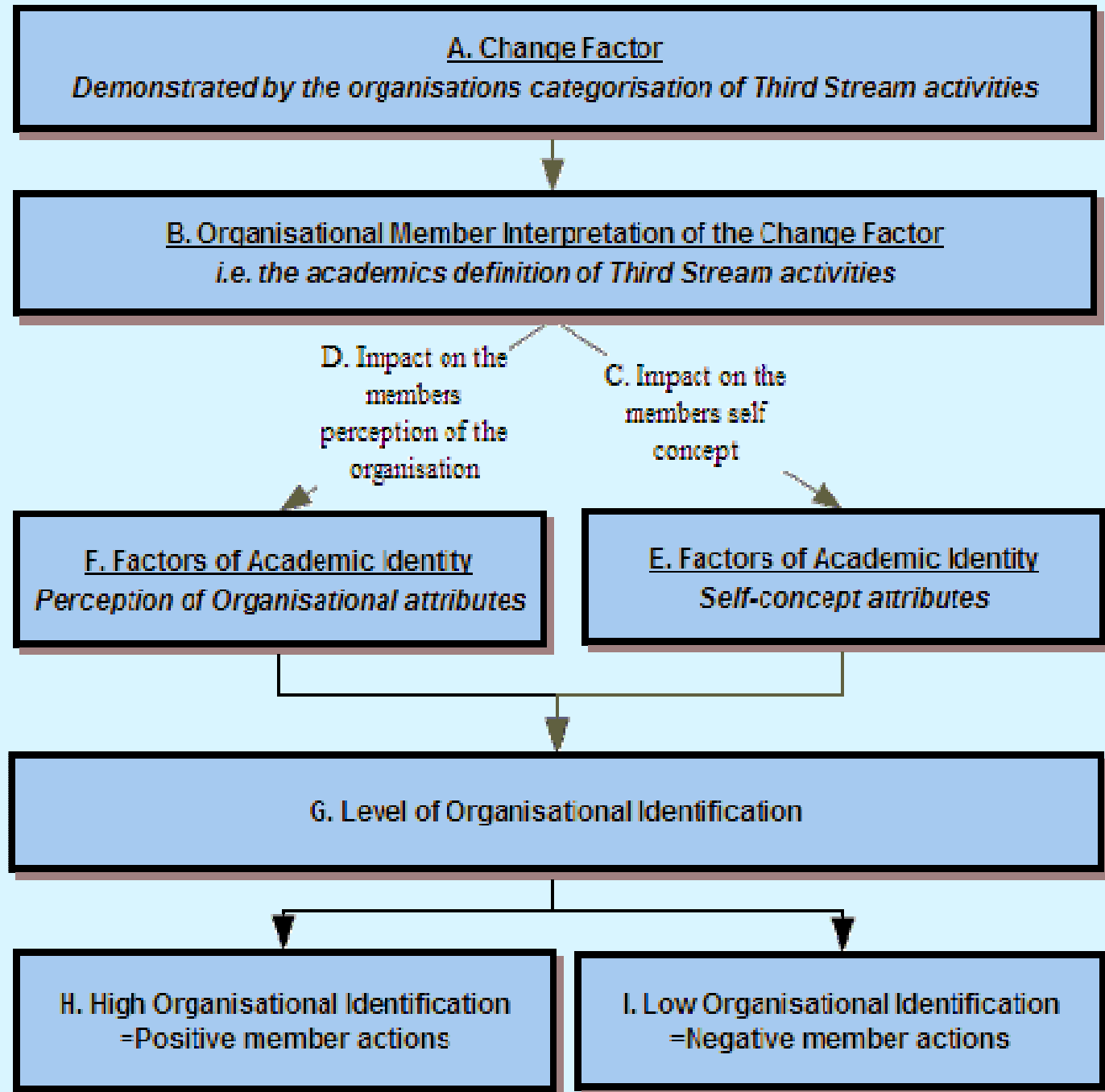
### University use of entrepreneurial terminology and measures

TS within an entrepreneurial framework is placed within university strategic aims, mission and vision

- e.g “An enterprising organisation with enterprising staff and students;” (MMU 2008)

Articulated with income targets, within the strategies, defining engagement in entrepreneurial and financial terms.

# Organisational Identification with the Third Stream Change Factor. (Conceptual Schema)





# Organisations categorisation of TS/AE

- defined the case study's interpretation of TS by the organisations own measures.
- Representing the strategic direction and drivers for the university.

The researcher has utilised the case study organisations internal HEFCE “HEIF 4 Pro Forma”.

This is a document used to capture TS in faculties for central reporting.

This form is supplemented by the

- Academic Enterprise Strategic plan developed in 2007 and the
- MMU Cheshire Strategic Plan 2007-2008.

# Factors of Academic Enterprise and Third Stream

Academic Enrichment  
Collaboration development  
Community Engagement  
Conferences  
Consultancy  
Contract research (Business funded or Applied research)  
Curriculum Development Mainstreaming of innovative products  
Development of Knowledge  
Employer led accredited courses  
Engagement with business  
Engagement with regional forums  
Facilities and equipment services  
Formal understanding of business need in region.  
Formal understanding of community need in region  
Funded Projects  
“High Interest” activity development  
Income generation/ commercial income  
Increase graduate recruitment

Increased Student Numbers  
International links with Universities and HE Colleges  
IP Intellectual Property income  
KTPs  
Outreach and networking  
Partnership opportunities  
Partnerships Brokering relationships/networking:  
Partnerships business assists  
Partnerships joint funding applications.  
Professional Body Links  
Raised awareness amongst businesses.  
Reputation for Knowledge  
Short courses (non accredited)  
Student enterprise  
Raised profile of staff within the business sector.  
Recognition as a Knowledge Centre  
Staff development  
Student enterprise training  
Student Social Enterprise schemes improving employability.  
Utilisation of a wider staff skills base

# Factors of academic identity

Henkel (2005)

- Academic as a living tradition, the history and role
- Academic autonomy- (pattern working life / quality of life)
- Academic control of teaching and research
- Academic freedom (research agenda and priorities)
- Bounded academic space, The strong
- Classification and boundaries between groups and disciplines, The strength of
- Community of scholars, The defining
- Community other, The defining
- Department, The
- Disciplinary culture
- Discipline, The
- Epistemology, The
- Institution, The
- Integration into the community, The level of
- Managerial culture, The
- Multiple and contradictory identities (avoiding fixation on a single identity)
- Narrative account of self and changing of identity over time, The
- Obligations, fulfilment and respect of the community, The
- Power of the group/community, The
- Status in the nation “definers, producers, transmitters and arbiters of advanced knowledge”
- Unit, The

# Method

- Seven academics were selected for the study.
  - (Humanities, Business Management and Social Science)
- 1. Individual member data was established, including;
  - Length of service in MMU, Length of service as an academic, Role, Title, Subject area, Prior career, Age
- 2. Approximation of the time spent on Teaching, Research, Administration and Other activities was established.
- 3. An open semi-structured interview on Academic Identity / Organisational Identity,
  - factors for academic identity, issued to the interviewee as cards to prioritise in response to a set of questions.
- 4. Separate open semi-structured interviews on Academic Enterprise and Third Stream
  - using cards to prioritise in response to a set of questions exploring definitions and relative importance compared to teaching and research.

# Findings

## A Qualitative level of Organisational Identity

Organisational Members are experiencing a Low Level of Organisational Identification with the University.

### Key examples

- Managerial Culture vs Academic Autonomy/Freedom/Control, (Administration)
  - Managerial culture viewed as important for the university, Academic Autonomy viewed as publicly supported but contradicted through administrative controls.
- Institutional Hierarchy
  - OI with the individual unit, a significant level OI with the Department, less but some with the Faculty and little or non with the Institution.
- The Henkel (2005) derived factors of identity where found to be lacking in 2 areas. ;
  - Obligations to the 1. Learner and 2. The External Community.

# Findings

## The definition of TS and AE

- Members definitions of AE and TS were varied and contradictory
- Money featured highly within the interviews and there is a mixed view as to how this defines TS and AE. Clean / “dirty”

*“Really I think TS is make money, which is why lots of academics don’t like it really”.*

- Aspects of income generation are viewed as organisational drivers for TS and AE and its importance in defining TS and AE is secondary to individual and academic drivers.
- During discussions on money, each member preferred to define TS and AE by other characteristics which complemented, or was an intrinsic part of, their teaching, research, knowledge exchange (“*ideas out*”), community obligations and their career choice in becoming an academic.

# Findings - Activities %

## *Teaching, Research, Administration & “Other Activities”*

- *Given a definition of TS being one that is not Teaching or Research, this question was designed to reveal TS activities (Other Activities) undertaken*
- *TS activities are measured by the organisation as separate activities, this is not necessarily the operational experience of the members.*
- *Overall AE and TS are perceived as an embedded part of the member's core roles of teaching and research*
- *This resulted in many of the members being unable to separate the four activities (into distinct sections, as the researcher had envisaged.*

*“I would include the KTP supervision as part of my teaching, in a way.”*

*they can all “fall into the other three categories...Attending conference is research, KTP is research, research bids is research, organising a conference is part research part administration... virtually all other activity can be subsumed into those”*

# AE and TS definitions linked to Organisational Identity

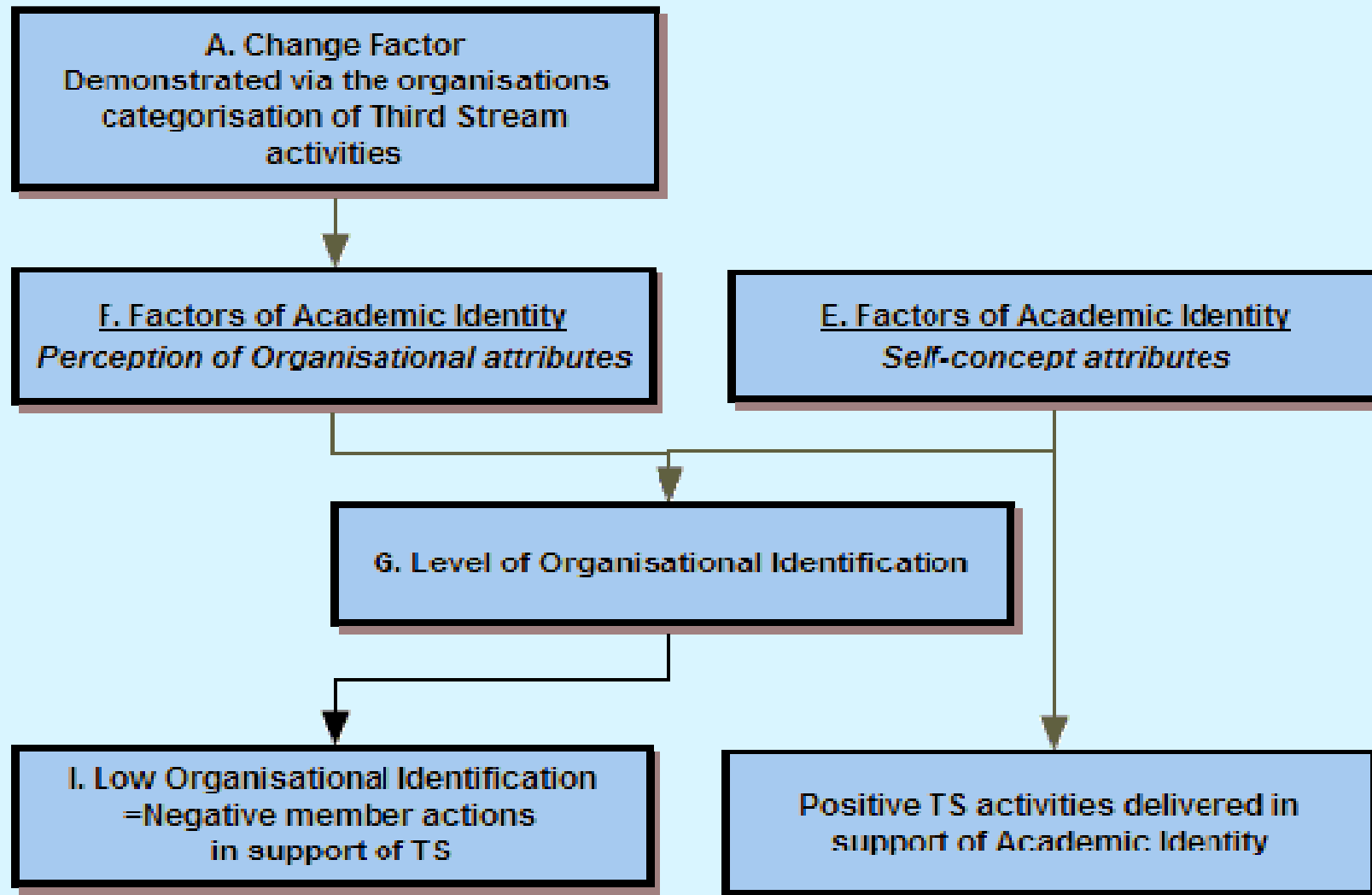
- The organisational members understanding of AE and TS is founded within the their Academic Identity
- The core activities of Teaching and Research enacted through Academic Autonomy, the Discipline, Obligations to the Learner and the Community are reflected in the definitions of TS and AE.
- Although the factors for AE and TS where all recognised by the organisational members, they are perceived within and/or as a compliment to their core identity.
- The organisation has developed a set of measures (the factors) formed from funding demands and the changing nature of universities, not based on this core identity.
- This results in a set of factors and definitions which are the same yet with **perspectives, priorities and drivers for engagement which are quite different.**
- The organisational members enact TS and AE activities because of the links to their core identity, not for income generation.
- However the financial aspects of AE and TS are negatively viewed by the organisational members and this association may result in an increased level of Negative Organisational Identification as these financial aspects are highlighted by the organisation.



# Summary

- The organisational members undertake third stream and knowledge transfer activities, due to their inherent links to their core identity, not due to managerial drivers such as income generation.
- The third stream and knowledge transfer activities are found to be a core part of their academic identity, not a separate adjunct.
- The level of organisational identity is found to be low and where Third Stream activities exist they occur in spite of, or regardless of the organisation, they occur because of the nature of Academic Identity.
- There seems little evidence (given the limited scope of this small evaluative and qualitative study) that organisational members are engaging with TS as a result of the Organisations Strategy.

# Summary: Academic organisational identification in relation to change & actions



# Strategic recommendations within KTP

Currently KTPs are “sold” internally to academic staff as a way of generating income and complementing the TS strategy.

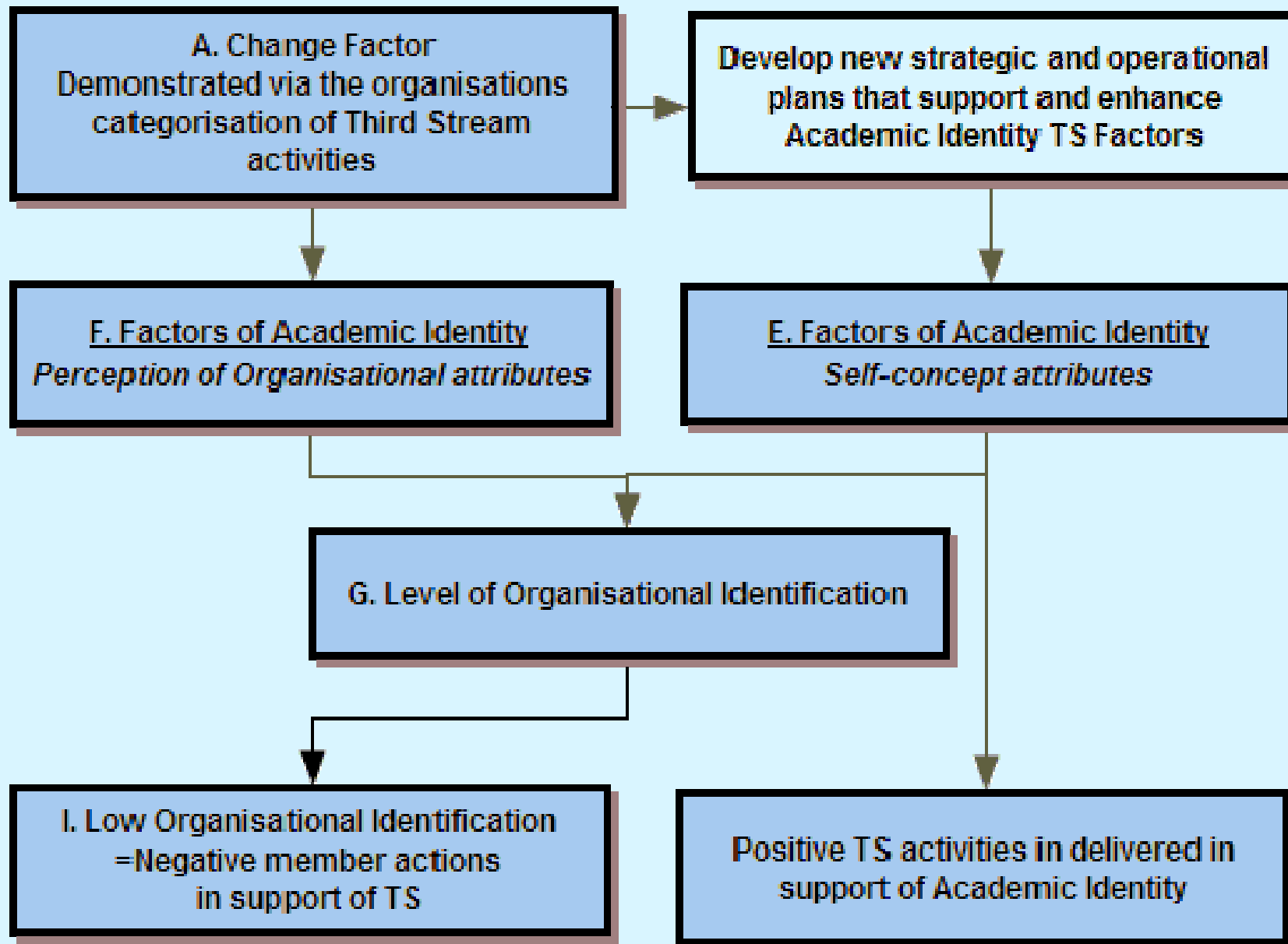
A new approach would be to emphasise aspects of the project which complement the individuals “Academic Identity self concept attributes”.

For example this could include an emphasis on the;

- Academic freedom intrinsic within a KTP (time, budget and subject area).
- Benefits to community organisations (improvements to services, cost savings).
- Benefits to the learners from up to date and direct research through KTP.
- KTP as a different teaching environment (an organisation rather than a class).
- Demonstrated examples of similar academic “types” working on projects which support these” Academic Identity self concept attributes”.

Understand academic identity and reflect this within strategic and operational plans.

# Strategic recommendations



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